HANDLING the BIG GUNS in BASEBALL

VERY Star Pitcher Has His Favorite Catcher and the "Inside" Work of the Battery Requires Strategy and Quick Wit in the Man Behind the getting Kitng's signs. He is a genius at it. Perhaps ball. It was found that he had the ability and Kilng was being outguessed by some of the fleet power to disarrange the facial topography of opposing athletes with surprising case, and he was balled

been predicted he would cut down with his arm as if it were a scythe. It is certain that Kling was doing his best. He alone of all the Cubs lacked the confidence of chestiness before the series. The others thought that they were meeting a team of kids.

John Kling's Opinion.

Say for me if you want to quote me," urged Kling the night before the first game, "that I don't feel at

all sure. Mack has got a great team."

Then, after Brown and disintegrated in that second game, Chance came down on Kling with all the drive of speech of which he is capable, and he is a very competent orator along some lines. This team of kids had stolen his signs. It is always "signs," not "signals,"

as a gridiron hero when opposing teams began to question his previous record. He freely admitted that he had played baseball for money and this

that he had played baseout for money and this stopped his progress as a college athlete.

Meyers had made an impression on the Dartmouth faculty and was asked to remain and complete his course, but he went to Harrisburg. Pa., where he started to play professional ball in earnest. The manager of that club went to Butte, in the Northwestern League and, while he did not think that Meyers had the logredients of a catcher, he was short of material that season and sent for the Indian. He had not been asked to renew his centract with Harrisburg the year before, and he went to Butte with the inevitable tag of his career attached to him:-

He'll never make a catcher. That is a hard thing to live down in baseball circles. It's like dragging a ball and chain into your profession after you. The sentence "He will never make an actor" has killed many a young man just trying to chisel his way into that school of art. It is usuany aftered by some manager who would have declared that Henry Irving would never make good. Maror next went to St. Paul, a club in the American Association, and with him went the label, "He will never make a catcher" He stayed in St. 1 year and was sold to the Glants for \$6,000. He stayed in St. Paul for one

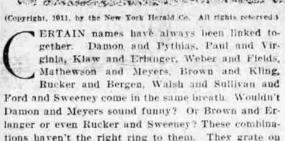
'He'll never make a catcher," said "Mike" Kelley,

He had the most wonderful curves that I have ever looked at, and when he was pitching against bush league clubs the batters couldn't see the ball. But be hadn't been in more than two games in the National League when the other teams had discovered his one weakness—his inability to keep on the ground. As soon as he would start to pitch both coaches and the batter would get after him, while two or three players on the bench would make a chorus if they thought that they could get away with it. I have heard Clarke -Griffith shout: Watch his foot.

"He would do this just as Marquard was about to pitch, and 'Rube' would forget and throw a ball. Then Griffith would go through an elaborate kick to the umpire, asserting that Marquard was pitching would go out to investigate, and by the time that the

little one act drama was completed Marquard wouldn'





dropped on the pavement or a split infinitive between the teeth of a college professor. "Mathewson and Kling for the Glants," shouts the umpire, and the fans sit up and stir about. What is wrong? A false note has been struck. The sensitive car of the baseball fan has detected the discord. it doesn't sound right. And then the fan realizes.

Mathewson. But-"Mathewson and Meyers for New York," sings the umpire.

Ah! That's harmony, as Bert Williams might remark. It is music to the ear of the fan, carefully tuned to the pitch-or pitcher. When this announcement is wafted over the audience of thirty thousand there is no stir. It is received as a piece of music perfectly rendered. It rings right. Why?

Because Mathewson and Meyers always work together," replies the fan. More. They are baseball affinities. Listen to the resonance in the combination of names, and the alliteration and the poetry when they win, which is quite often. Separate them and it sounds

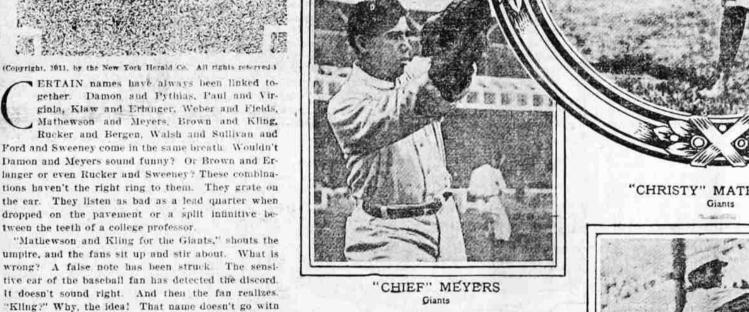
Handling the big guns of baseball is no easy job It takes a certain man to do it, as it takes a trained marksman to make the guns of the navy effective. The pitchers get all the credit and the glory, but the catchers are the marksmen who direct the fire of these big guns and train them to do the most deadly Separate the big pitcher from his regular catcher and it is like taking away the negative electrode of a storage battery. It promptly loses its power to produce electricity.

Look at the combinations that have been broken up and the results. Last season while Kling was catch ing the far famed "Three Fingered" Brown he was the most effective pitcher in the National League. He had confidence in jesting John, and he pitched internal disorders developed, having their source in the world's series with the Athletics, the set of games which was so disastrous to the Cubs. No one knows exactly what the difficulties were except the members of the Chicago team, and they make the Sphinx seem garrulous compared to the freedom with which they talk about the trouble. Professional secrets! Kling has been sent to Boston, and see the effect on the pitching of Brown. He has delivered just about one influential game this season, sealed and ready for mounting in the Cubs' percentage column. There are those who will say that he is going back. just naturally declining, but nevertheless it is tically certain that he misses Kling, with his steadying manner and quiet assurance behind the bat.

Rumor hints that the trouble started between the old battery mates after the second game of the world's series in Philadelphia last fall. The three fingered one was chosen to pitch this game, and it predicted that he would make the Athletics look foolish. He had gathered inside data on their styles and knew just what each disliked. For the rest he depended on Kling. Now, if that game had gone as the experts had forecast the famous old battery might sever have been disrupted.

Brown was knocked out of the box, and he borned Kling, so rumor continues He charged that the backstop refused to consider his judgment and insisted on feeding certain batters a kind of ball that he (Brown) knew they would thrive upon. More. Brown asserted that Kling was giving his signals in such a way that "Topsy" Hartsel, whose eagle eye and keen scent for signs make the celebrates Holmes look like a blind man, was getting each flash from the coaching lines and communicating it to the batsman. The result was that the hitter knew exactly what to expect, and the tri-digital pitcher was orking with loaded dice. So said Brown in his ire after he was knocked out of the box.

Champions lose hard J J Jeffries said that he was doped after meeting one dark fist too often at Reno on our national holiday. Perhaps Hartsel was



"You gave your signs so that a blind man in the next county could have gotten them," grumbled Brown to Kling in the club house after that game. The Cubs were a silent, sullen group, methodically putting

on their clothes, accompanied by none of the shower bath badinage that follows a victory. Kling resented the slur. It is his nature. He does not forget.
"That curve ball of yours to-day would have made Eve looked overdressed, it had so little on it. I couldn't identify it from your straight one," replied Kling, for

The two have separated, and what has become of Brown as a pitcher? Perhaps he is getting old, but maybe he has lost the one catcher who could get the most out of him-the marksman who could direct and train and steady this Big Gun. It was predicted that when Bresnahan was sent

Louis by McGraw there would never be a who could handle Mathewson and get the best out of him. And for a time it seemed that these prophets of evil had called "Matty" turn slipped and skidded along for some time during the season following Bresnahan's departure, and it was said that he had receded and was in the hearse on the way to his baseball grave-Then along came John Meyers, alias "Chief" Meyers, an Indian About this inter-

esting ball person there is a word to say They always told me. said Meyers, "that I wasn't a catcher. When I went from Butte to St. Paul they said I would never make a catcher. They

said the same thing when I was sold to the Giants. Yet I am sticking so I must have something." "How about handling Mathewson?" The big Indian smiled until it looked as if he was

JOHN A. KLING

Boston

That has been one of the pleasures of my life." he answered. "I hever knew how easy it was to catch until I started to handle Matty. We understand each other so well now that I seldom give signs. We have 'bull would come into ane spikes first and call me all been together so long that I know exactly what he the names that they had been accustomed to apply to heen together so long that I know exactly what he is going to pitch in certain situations."

Meyers first leaped into the scramble for fame, money and glory packing raisins into boxes in Riverside, Cal. His talent was directed toward stamping the labels onto the boxes after they had been filled. As he was not in love with his art he began to play basefull on the side. He found this to be more remunerative than stamping raisin boxes, so he went down to El Paso, Texas, where he was offered a job as government interpreter and a nice opportunity to play base-The Indian speaks Spanish as well as he does English, and Webster's Dictionary is his favorite book. It was in one of the baseball tournaments in Texas that Ralph Glaze, of Dartmouth, found Meyers and

induced him to go to college. He was tried at foot-

the manager of the St. Paul team, as he accepted the

MORDECAI

BROWN

Cubs

"Chief" Meyers' Success.

The big Indian smiled until it looked as if he was going to crush his features around into the back of while telling of his baseball carrer, so I must have something. But I have had a hard time making good. Some day I am going to write a book and call it 'How I Made Good in the filg League'. When I first started every one was out to get me, and all the crabs playing the umpires. I couldn't get back, for what chance has an Indian? What chance has one ever had?

"Mathewson: There is the greatest nitcher who ever set foot into the box. Is it hard to catch him? No. I never knew how easy carehing was until I began to handle his goods. He has a head and thinks for himself. I don't have to keep talking to him al! the time and religing him to steady down and not to Is it hard to handle the big ones? No. It is the pitcher just breaking into the lengue who gives the catcher trouble. And, do you know, I would rather make six errors myself than see 'Matty'

"Marquard was the pitcher with whom I had the

know whether he was pitching baseball or shooting 'Steady up. Rube,' I would say. 'He is just doing that to get your goat. But Marquard could no more steady up than a débutante who has been proposed to for the first time.

RUSSELL FORD

Highlanders

'You're a busher and always will be,' jeered Lobert, with Cincinnati, after he had made a triple off him one day, and the 'Rube' was so anxious to make good that he lost its nerve entirely for a week.

not minding the small talk of the coaches and batters. They called it baseball taught at home, but I hated to see a pitcher with all that ability go back to the minors. He has just begun to find himself now, and he is going to make one of the greatest

pitchers that the game has ever known. If you don't believe it sit behind home plate some day and watch his curve ball. He still needs steadying up occasionally, but he is practic ally over his stage fright. and now is the time that he is going to get revenge on all those players who tried to spoil him when he was breaking in.

Louis Drucke ts another pitcher who is hard to handle. He has plenty of nerve, but he lacks life. He gets into a tight place. 'Ginger up, Louis,' I say, and he spits on his hands and rubs them to-

gether, as if he was about to pick up a piece of knitting. But the Big Fellow It's a pleasure to receive Many enteners think

that one of their duties is to talk to batters, especially young and unsophisticated bitters. This will spoil the most promising candidate. John Kling was

IRA THOMAS

Athletics

a bad man with novices.

"Look out." he would warn the nervous hitter.

"This fellow I've got out there to day is a wild one, and if he beans you it may be the last thing that you everknow. He bit a patter last week, and the poor jay isn't out of the hospital yet."

They Kilmy would, then, a bight fact one in Then Kling would signal for a high, fast one in-

You ought to wear a rubber on that left foot," be

would say after the batter had stepped back, the car-dinal sin of a batter. You almost stepped into the water pail over by the bench there that time." A good catcher is the corner stone of a good balt

He must steady the other players and think club. He must steady the other players and think all the time. He must drop a word to a pitcher as he wabbles or discourage a batter. He must infect ginger. Bresnaham of St. Louis, is a wonder at inspiring his men. He must hide his signals and watch the bases closely. He carries the burden usually, and the pitcher gets all the glory. In many instances the catcher does all the thinking for both. That he was taking away a certain many of the That is why taking away a certain man so often

An opposing team steals bases on a catcher, and

he is blamed when usually it is the pitcher's faul for taking too slow a wind up or not holding the mat close to the bag by frequent throws. Then there is always a guessing match on between a catcher and a base stealer. If it is thought that the man is going to try to get an extra base the sign for a pitch our is given. That is when the pitcher hurls the ball wide so that the catcher has a better chance to throw. If the runner can lead the catcher to sthink that he is going to steal and get him to sign out and then holds his base, he can the pitcher into a hole and upset the machinery

A Guessing Match.

The coach will yell, "There he goes!" as nearly like the first baseman of the club as possible in an effort to get the catcher to signal for a pitch out. a pitch out and the pitcher has wasted a bail. If he can do this twice then the pitcher has to put over, and the runner has a much better chance of

"Watch his arm!" shouts Clarke Griffith, and a base runner starts for second.

It is a signal. The catcher will listen for it

Griffith repeats, and the pitcher wastes a bali. But the runner stands this time as if he had grown fast. John Kling is one of the willest catchers that ever wore a big mitt. He was outguessed in the world's series last fall by "Eddle" Collins, the second baseman of the Athletics, who stole bases on him at-most at will. That is one thing which led the Cubs to believe that the Athletics were getting their sign for a pitch out. Kling worked an old trick in a pinch once, and a serious crush it was, too, which did a great deal toward turning the tide of the most Important game ever played in baseball, and is worth

It was the play off contest in 1908 between the Glants and the Cubs. In one of the early innings Herzog, then young and ambitious was on first The Giants apparently had gotten after Pfeister and a rally had started. Kling dropped a strike on purpose and Herzog fell for the old trick He started for second base and was thrown out by a city block. The rally waned and later the Cutes won the game.

Gibson, of Pittsburg, rated by many to be the best eatcher in the game to-day, is a constant chatterer to batters, trying to worry them with his small talk. Thomas, of the Athletics, is a type of the manufactured catcher. When he was with the Yankees several scasons ago he was slow, a poor thrower and everything that a catcher should not be. Cornelius McGbheuddy- Connie" Mack-took hold of him and has made a catcher out of the man. It was prophesied before the world's series last fall that Chance's fleet crew would steal as many bases as they cared to on tra Thomas and his leaden wing, but he threw them out again and again, and com-pletely outguessed the Cubs. It developed afterward that 'Billy' Sullivan, of the Chicago White Sox, who had the experience of one world's series with the Cubs, had coached Thomas diligently be-

fore the contests. There is one grand old catcher, William Suilivan. Without him 'Ed" Waish with the spit ball, is not blinself. In a recent game with the Yankees this was shown. Waish had been altehing great ball until Sullivan was removed to make room for a pine bitter, and the big twirler lost in the tenth hinding.

ball buckers are the nurdest for enteners to handle. Without Sweeney, Russell Ford, of the New York American Learne Club, oses his value. This was the case in the post-sesson series with the Glants last fail. Sweeney and his finger silt during the first game and Ford pitched without confidence in the umbering Mitchell and lost. This pitcher has the most eccentric spit ball of the lot and it is the most difficult to handle. It breaks two ways and Ford alone knows how he nelfectes this result. He has not

told sweeney this. It is his secret. All these catchers admire their star pitchers with an admiration that approaches close on to adoration. Those three that Matty put over in the seventh ming," said Meyers, after "Big Six" had fanned some one in a crisis in one of the post-season games has fall, "were the fastest three balls ever thrown by a pitcher. I thought that they were going to bore a through my glove."

'He's got something to-day," says Thomas to a newspaper friend in the press stand, with an elaborate wink, meaning Coombs of the Athletics. "How is he?" Clarke asks Gibson, after warming up "Babe" Adams. "The old jump's on the ball," answers the big catcher, with a pleased smile,

Next Week, "A Forgotten Baseball Star's Memories of the Old Days"